**Ten Ways to Assess Without Putting a Mark on Paper**

(ideas taken from Setting and Using Criteria, Kathleen Gregory, Caren Cameron, Anne Davies, Connections Publishing, 1997)

In the above book, the authors suggest 10 different ways teachers can give the type of feedback that helps students improve their work. A summary of these strategies is given below.

Proposed Strategies:

* Met, Not Yet Met
* Met, Not Yet Met, I Noticed
* Sample Match
* Performance Grid
* More of, Less or
* N.B. (Pay Attention)
* Specific Remarks
* Using Acronyms
* The Next Step
* Key Questions

Met, Not Yet Met

The focus is on having students complete their work. Set the criteria for a task/assignment. Assess student performance in relation to the criteria by putting a check in the “Met” or “Not Yet Met” column for each criteria statement.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Criteria | Met | Not Yet Met |
| 1. | ✓ |  |
| 2. |  | ✓ |
| 3. | ✓ |  |

Met, Not Yet Met, I Noticed

This strategy goes beyond completing work and focuses on aspects of quality and/or progress in the work. Set the criteria for a task/assignment. Assess student performance in relation to the criteria by checking “Not Yet Met” and highlighting the part of the criteria that needs attention, or checking “Met” and writing brief comments in the “I Noticed . . .” column. These comments should focus on the quality of the work done and/or any progress made since the last task/assignment.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Criteria | Met | Not Yet Met | I Noticed… |
| 1. Use proper problem solving format | ✓ |  | *your “let” statements clearly communicate the meaning of the variables* |
| 2. |  | ✓ |  |

Sample Match

Many students need to both hear and see what it is that is expected of them. By showing students actual samples of work that meet criteria, then reviewing them together, students gain a clearer understanding of what counts. Find two or three samples of a completed assignment that range from satisfactory to strong. On the samples, write specific phrases, using the vocabulary of the criteria to point out aspects of the work that meet the criteria. These statements should be descriptive and non-judgemental. Number the samples, and post them for students to see. Assess student work by recording the sample number that it most closely matches. Provide one or two reasons for this match.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criteria | Closest match is sample # \_\_\_\_ because… |
| 1. |  |
| 2. |
| 3. |

Performance Grid

This strategy focuses on providing a range of descriptions of student performance, written in student language, i.e. a rubric. This is a familiar strategy for teachers in Ontario. Assess student performance by highlighting the box for each criteria that most closely matches the work that they have done.

More of, Less of

With this strategy, students learn where to concentrate their efforts and what aspects of their work count. Assess student performance by giving students feedback regarding what they have to do more or less of to meet the criteria.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Criteria | More of… | Less of… |
| 1. |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |

N.B. (Pay Attention)

Assessing work in progress is important if we want students to meet with success. The focus of the N.B. strategy is on giving students regular, specific feedback about their work while they are in the process of completing it. During the progress of an assignment, record on dated stick-on notes what criteria the student needs to pay attention to, and attach them to the work. When student hand in their work, mark the stick-on notes with a “✓” or an “X” indicating whether or not they have paid attention to the N.B.

Specific Remarks

The focus is on providing feedback for students that is specific and descriptive. Students can then repeat a success and will know what they need to improve.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criteria | Specific Remarks |
| 1. |  |
| 2. |  |

Using Acronyms

Using acronyms helps students remember the criteria. This simple approach also shows that learning is a process, and that we don’t necessarily get everything done the first time (nor do we expect to). Examine the criteria to find key words that can be worked into an acronym. Post the acronym. Assess student performance by recording the letter(s) of the acronym that students have met. This immediate feedback lets students know what criteria they have met, and what they still need to work on.

Criteria for Solving 1-Variable Problems

V Define the **v**ariable.

E Write the **e**quation.

S **S**olve the equation.

T Write a “**T**herefore” statement.

The Next Step

This strategy focuses on showing students how they can take small steps to move forward in their learning when large leaps seem overwhelming. Assess student performance by recording two or three steps that they could take to move forward. These could describe some of the ways to improve their work, such as extending ideas, revising specific aspects of the work, and practising new skills.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criteria | The next step is… |
| 1. |  |
| 2. |  |

Key Questions

This strategy focuses on giving students information that builds on their strengths, points out one or two concerns, and gives suggestions for realistic goals. Assess student performance by recording answers to the following key questions: What’s working? What’s not? What’s next? Refer to the criteria that you have shared with your students for specifics to use in your comments.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Criteria | What’s working? | What’s not? | What’s next? |
| 1. |  |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |  |